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ABSTRACT

The School Within-a-School Program (SWAS) of the Kansas City (Missouri) Public Schools was established as an intervention/reform program, which became part of the court-ordered desegregation program, for at-risk students in grades 7 and 9. In the last year of evaluation, the group consisted of 678 students. This summative longitudinal evaluation examined the following four areas: (1) enrollment; (2) program implementation; (3) perceptions of program participants; and (4) achievement. Achievement test scores were within program guidelines, but scores on the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills were higher for SWAS students during their participation than for their previous two school years. The SWAS helped students improve their attendance and grades, and many students felt it helped them improve their basic skills. Classroom observations showed evidence of successful implementation of the Linking Learning Model. Both administrators and teachers were committed to the goals and objectives of the program and were satisfied with the support provided by SWAS resource teachers, but they suggested major changes for the next year, including expanding to grade 10. Personnel selection and training were also considered in need of improvement. The findings support the conclusion that the district needs to ensure program stability for the SWAS program. Thirteen tables and seven bar graphs present study data. There are an eight-item list of references and two appendices with two tables of classroom observation comparisons and an overview of the SWAS approach for at-risk urban students. (SLD)

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Summative Evaluation
of the
School Within-A-School (SWAS) Program

1988-1989
1989-1990
1990-1991

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August 1991

Evaluation Office
Desegregation Planning Department
The School District of Kansas City, Missouri

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Executive Summary

This summative evaluation of the School-Within-A School (SWAS) Program examined four areas: enrollment, program implementation, perceptions of program participants, and achievement, and presents a longitudinal perspective for previous implementation years.

There was evidence of gains in achievement scores, significant progress toward improving student attendance rates and implementation of the Linking Learning Model goals, and less progress toward implementation of organizational guidelines.

Although achievement test scores were well within program guidelines, gains in ITBS scores were higher for students during the year students spent in the SWAS program than the previous two school years. This may indicate that students who are two or more grade levels below the norm, need more than one year of intervention to achieve grade level test scores.

The SWAS program helped students improve their attendance and grades. The ninth grade SWAS attendance rate (87%) was considerably higher than the district's ninth grade attendance rate (72%). SWAS students believed the program had helped them realize they can do well in school. Many students indicated that the SWAS program had helped them improve their basic skills, and 25% of the seventh grade and 23% of the ninth grade students reported making the honor roll for the first time.

Classroom observations showed evidence of successful implementation of the Linking Learning Model. The majority of the teaching observed in classrooms was based on SWAS guidelines (27% in the 7th grade program and 46% in the 9th grade program) and learning structures (61% and 48%, respectively).

Although both administrators and teachers were committed to the goals and objectives of the program and were satisfied with the support provided by the SWAS resource teachers, they would like to see major changes next year. Administrators indicated a desire to expand the program to the 10th grade or add another course to the SWAS curriculum (reading or theme-related). Teachers expressed a need to evaluate student placement criteria and to receive additional training in cooperative learning and instructional strategies.

Various components of the recommended organizational structure were in place in the 13 participating schools. However, one of the most important and weakest links was personnel. The SWAS program required a specialized staff of highly motivated and well-trained teachers. It will be difficult to maintain program stability when, according to administrators, only 50% of the 7th teachers and 71% of the 9th grade teachers were selected based on SWAS criteria.

In addition, only 72% of the teachers indicated that they attended the summer inservice training sessions.

As a result of these findings, there is strong evidence to support the conclusion that the district needs to provide program stability for the SWAS program.

Summative Evaluation
of the
School Within-A-School (SWAS) Program

1988-1989
1989-1990
1990-1991

Introduction

The SWAS Program was established during the 1983-1984 school year and designated a Court-ordered desegregation program in 1985. Subsequent to 1985, court-ordered funding was suspended during the 1988-89, 1989-90, and 1990-91 school years. Although the SWAS Program is currently funded through the district's operational budget, this evaluation was based on guidelines established by the *Long-Range Magnet School Plan* (Hale & Levine, 1986) and the *SWAS Linking Learning Staff Manual* (1987-88).

The SWAS program has been evaluated in three year cycles. The first three years of a program included two years of formative evaluations and ended with a summative evaluation. Starting with the second cycle, years four and five, student achievement and enrollment trends only were reported.

This summative evaluation will present a longitudinal view of the program's progress and outcomes between 1988-1991, including enrollment and achievement trends, and the extent of program implementation.

Program Description

The School-Within-A-School (SWAS) program is an intervention/reform program for students in grades seven and nine who have been identified as "at risk." The major goal of SWAS is to bridge the gap between the students' present performance and their grade level expectations utilizing a "Linking Learning Model." The model emphasizes the establishment

of a team of highly motivated and trained teachers working with a selected population of students. The SWAS team of teachers utilize multicultural teaching strategies and learning arrangements designed to accomplish overall improvement in student self-concept, comprehension, higher order thinking/problem solving skills and school attendance. The team is typically composed of a half-time coordinator and teachers in reading, math, English, social studies and in some cases, science. Critical to the effectiveness of the team is the establishment of a common planning period for SWAS teachers to facilitate program coordination and link learning across subject areas. Class sizes are kept to a minimum in order to promote individualized instruction and small group learning arrangements.

While the program has never had a director per se, primary leadership for the SWAS program is provided by one resource teacher housed in the Curriculum Department. However, during a two and one-half year period, there were two resource teachers assigned to the SWAS program (1986-87, 1988, and 1990-91). During the transition in funding sources, from the district (1983-84), to court-ordered (from 1985-86 to 1987-88), back to district (from 1988-89 to 1990-91), the SWAS program has experienced some uncertainties. Some principals report difficulties with staffing and scheduling SWAS classes. Availability of funds in time for school opening resulted in disruptions in the inservice training schedules.

Students selected for the SWAS Program must meet at least one of the following criteria: (1) the student scores two or more grade levels below the norm on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) in reading and math; or (2) the student scores in the range of 30-55 on the Degrees of Reading Power test (DRP).

The program is currently implemented in seven of the district's twelve senior high schools, and in six of the district's eleven middle schools. The participating schools included: Central Middle, King Middle, Northeast Middle, Nowlin Middle, Southeast Middle, and Westport Middle; and Central Senior, East Senior, Northeast Senior, Southeast Senior, Southwest Senior, Van Horn Senior and Westport Senior. Out of a total enrollment of 678 students, 339 were senior high and 339 were junior high students.

In order to achieve desired improvements with "at-risk" students, the *SWAS Program Linking Learning Staff Manual* (1987-88, p. 5), established the following goals:

1. Develop teaching team relationships to enhance the social, emotional, and academic performance of low achieving students.

2. Bridge the gap between student performance and grade level expectations by using reading comprehension, higher order thinking skills, and problem solving strategies. Emphasis is placed on cooperative group learning, the writing process, materials matching, linking learning, and effective teaching techniques.

3. Build positive student self-concept and relationships to others.

4. Build a model for the effective secondary school.

The philosophical orientation that established the program was reflected in the overview statement (*SWAS Linking Learning Staff Manual*, 1987-88, p. 2):

> Academic intervention programs that give special attention to students who have experienced little success in school are not only viewed as a responsibility of an educational system, but they are an obligation to those who hold the intrinsic desire to provide quality service to that population of students. It is in this framework that SWAS, a School-Within-A-School Program, began in the School District of Kansas City, Missouri.

Evaluation Design

This summative evaluation report addressed enrollment, program implementation effectiveness, perceptions of program participants, achievement and presents a longitudinal perspective for previous implementation years.

The evaluation will consider the following questions:

1. What is the enrollment of the SWAS Program?

2. Does the program demonstrate an effect on the achievement as measured by the district's standardized tests?

3. Was the program implemented according to the *SWAS Linking Learning Model*?

4. What are the perceptions of students, teachers, principals, and program coordinators regarding program implementation?

Enrollment figures used in this evaluation were obtained from the SWAS coordinator's enrollment report. Achievement outcomes were measured by the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS) and the Tests of Achievement and Proficiency (TAP) using percentile rankings. In addition, scores from the Degrees of Reading Power test (DRP) were reported.

Program implementation and goal accomplishment data were gathered through site visits, classroom observations, interviews and surveys. Perception data were collected to ascertain how students, teachers, principals and program coordinators felt about the progress of program implementation.

Results

Enrollment

As shown in Table 1, the seventh grade SWAS enrollment increased from 332 students in 1988-89, to 422 students in 1989-90, and then declined to 339 students in 1990-91. Similarly, the 9th grade SWAS enrollment increased from 322 students in 1988-89, to 353 students in

Table 1
Enrollment in the School Within-A-School (SWAS) Program
1985 - 1991

Year / Grade	Total	Number of Schools
1985-1986		
Seventh Grade	424	5
Ninth Grade	454	7
1986-1987		
Seventh Grade	512	6
Ninth Grade	484	8
1987-1988		
Seventh Grade	322	4
Ninth Grade	380	8
1988-1989		
Seventh Grade	332	5
Ninth Grade	322	7
1989-1990		
Seventh Grade	422	6
Ninth Grade	353	7
1990-1991		
Seventh Grade	339	6
Ninth Grade	339	7

Note: Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole percent. Enrollment figurs are from the SWAS Coordinator's Enrollment Record, 1985-1991.

1990-91, and then declined to 339 students in 1990-91. Declines in enrollment were attributed to two factors: 1) the student capacity per grade level and 2) the number of students qualified for the program. In schools where the majority of students qualified, only students with the lowest test scores were placed in SWAS classrooms. While schools under renovations could accommodate fewer students in grades 7 and 9.

Improvements in attendance is an expectation of the SWAS program. Historically, SWAS attendance has exceeded the district's attendance rate (see Figure 1). As shown in Figure 1, in 1990-91, the ninth grade SWAS attendance rate (87%) was considerably higher than the district's (72%).

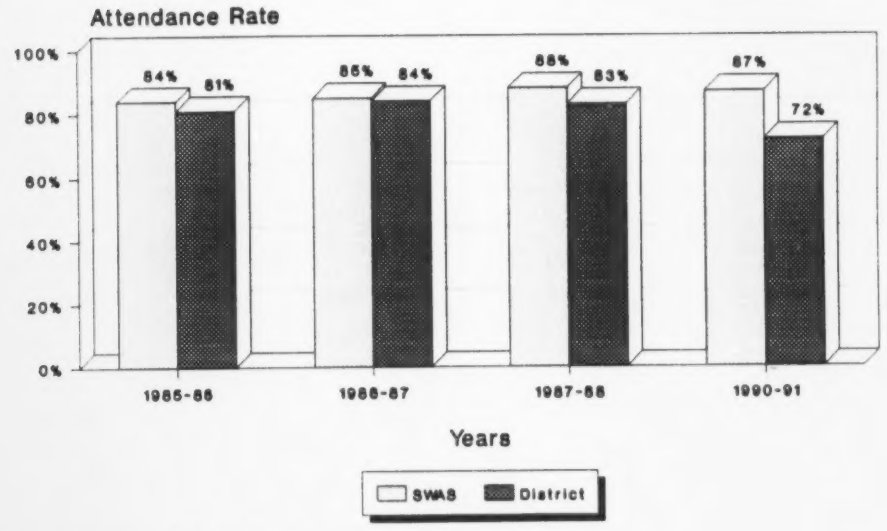
Implementation

Classroom observations were made to determine the extent to which the program utilized the SWAS Linking Learning Model. The model emphasized three components: teaching strategies, learning structures and classroom climate. Two SWAS classes were observed in each of the participating schools (N = 39 visits) for four or seven hour intervals. A total of 1789 minutes of observation data in 7th grade and 1719 minutes in 9th grade were collected from May to June, 1991. Percentages of time were computed for the number of minutes each activity was observed. Only one teaching strategy or learning structure could be observed per observation minute. Climate components were evaluated based on the frequency of each activity per classroom visit. Information about the current implementation year is presented in Figures 2A-6. Figure 2A, provides a global view of SWAS classroom activities. A longitudinal or historical view of classroom observation data is outlined in Appendix A.

Teaching strategies. As shown in Figure 2A, the majority of teaching observed in classrooms was based on SWAS guidelines. SWAS instructional methods were designed to emphasize comprehension development techniques. SWAS teaching was observed 27% in seventh grade and 46% in ninth grade classrooms. SWAS designated teaching strategies were implemented to address the unique needs of "at risk" students. For example, strategies that emphasize innovative ways to involve students at various ability levels, including prior knowledge, question only, advance organizer, graphic organizer, KWL (Know, What to Know, Learned), DRTA (Directed-Reading-Thinking), structured overview, etc.

Classroom management and interruptions. Classroom management was defined as any non-teaching activity including, taking attendance, passing-in or handing-out assignments, announcements, classroom visitors, etc. Classroom interruptions included major disciplinary

Figure 1
SWAS 9th Grade Attendance Rate Compared to District High School Attendance Rate



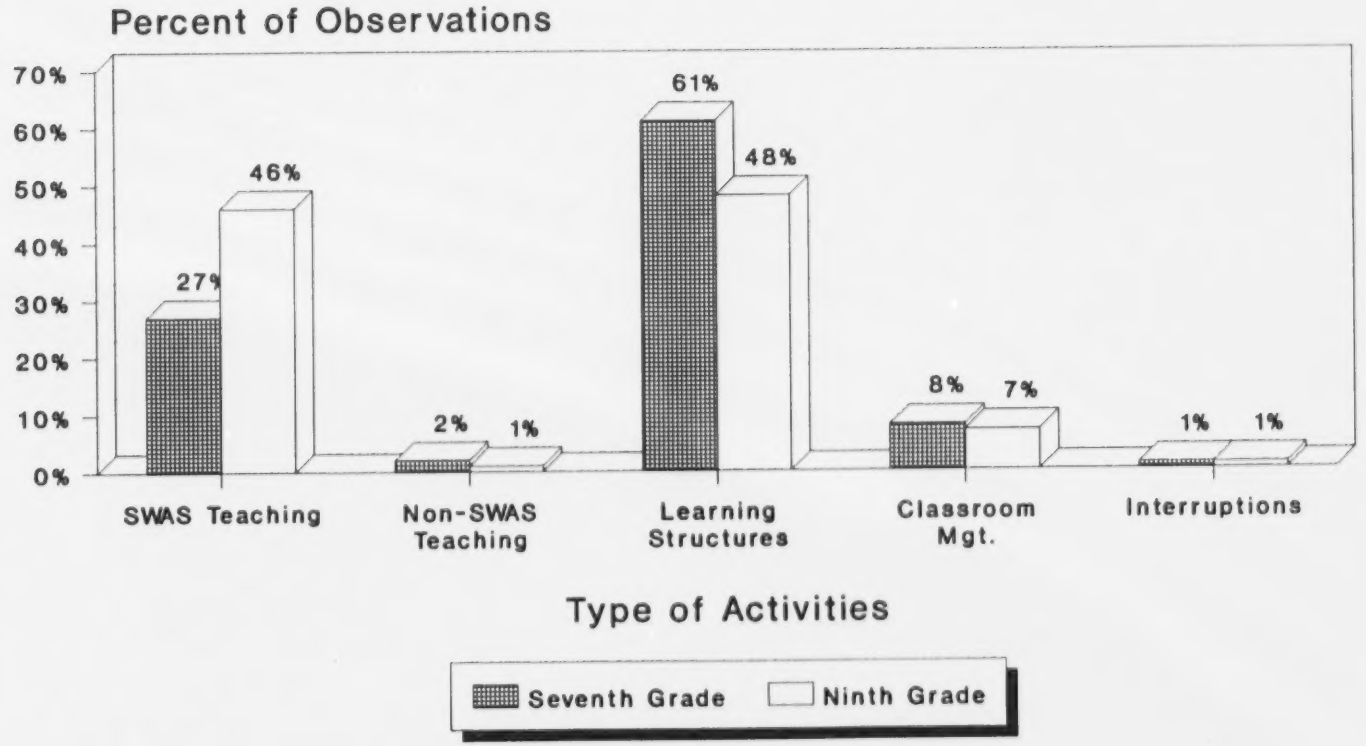
School Within-A-School, 1991

incidents, fire drills or outside disturbances. Limited time was observed on classroom management in the 7th grade SWAS (8%) and in the 9th grade SWAS (7%) while, for both programs, interruptions were observed during only 1% of the observation time.

Learning structures. SWAS learning arrangements were designed to address the needs of low achieving students (see Figure 2B). To facilitate maximum learning, students were placed in learning circles (small groups), teams, learning partners, worked on an individual basis, and other learning arrangements. Of the 61% of time spent in learning structures, seventh grade students spent 32% of their time in individual structures, 7% in learning partners and teams, 6% in class discussion, 4% in learning circles and 2% in JIGSAW 11 and class lecture. Ninth grade SWAS students spent 48% of the time in learning structures (individual 25%, learning circles and whole class discussion 8%, and 2% in learning partners and teams, whole class discussion and whole class lecture).

Teaching aids. Various teaching aids were used to make learning more attractive to students (see Figure 3). When teaching aids were not observed, they were categorized as "Other." Visual aids were defined as teaching using audio, video, or slide tape, while manipu-

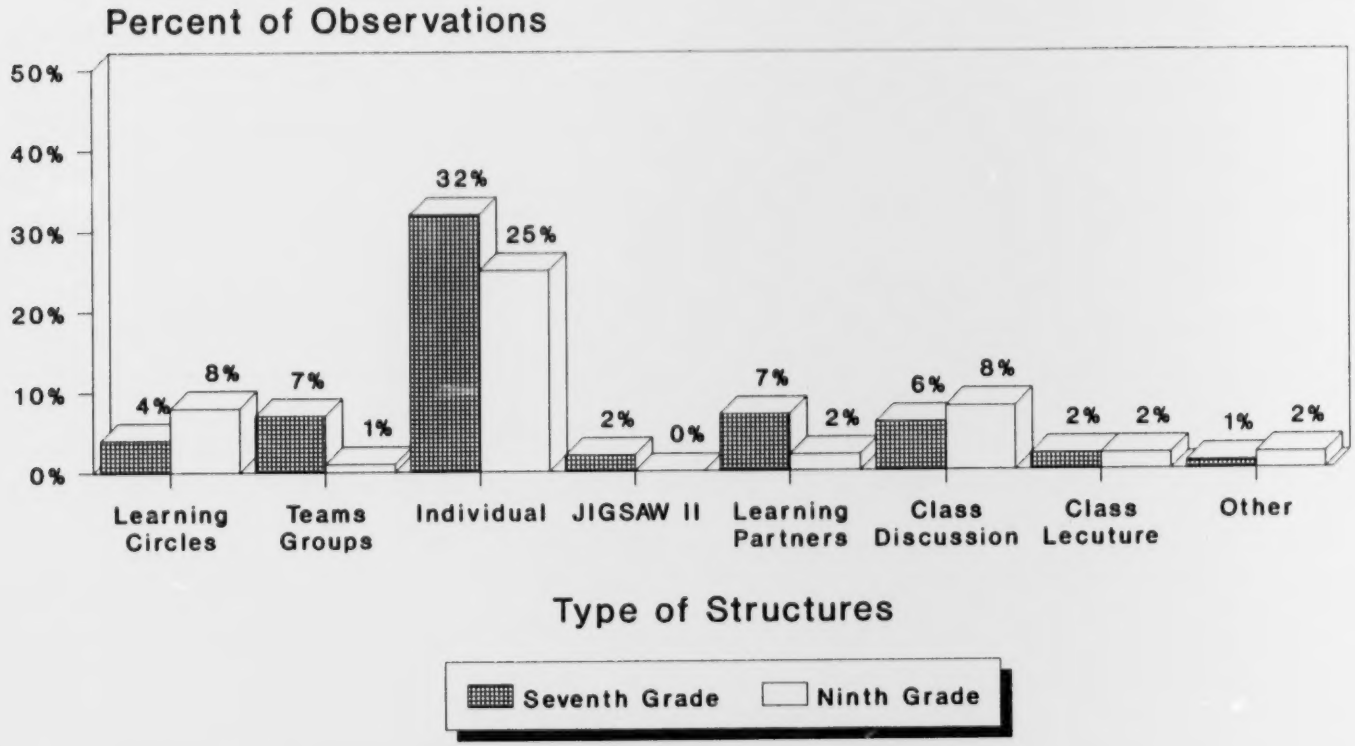
Figure 2A
School Within-A-School (SWAS) Program
Observation of Classroom Activities



7th Gr. observation time = 1789 minutes
9th Gr. observation time = 1719 minutes
Classroom visits = 39 each grade, 1991

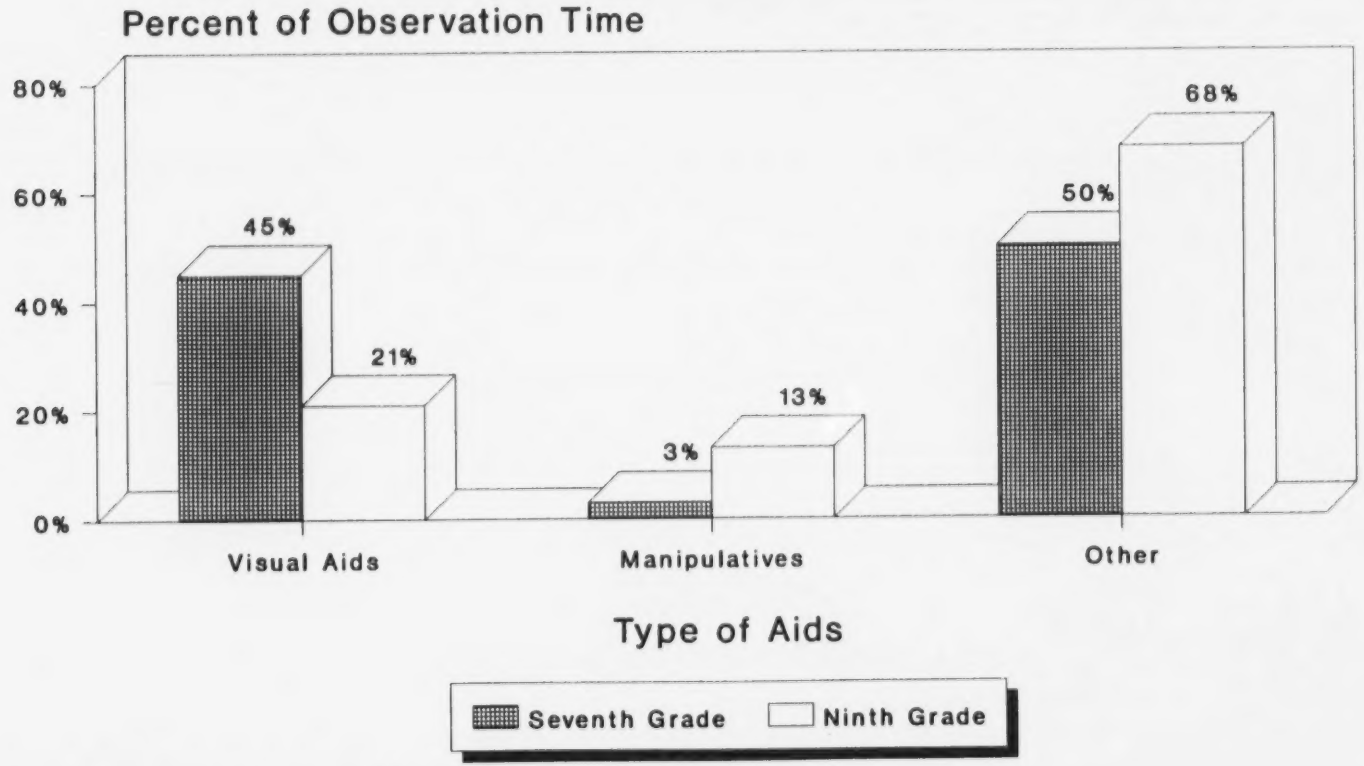
Figure 2B

School Within-A-School (SWAS) Program
Observation of SWAS Learning Structures



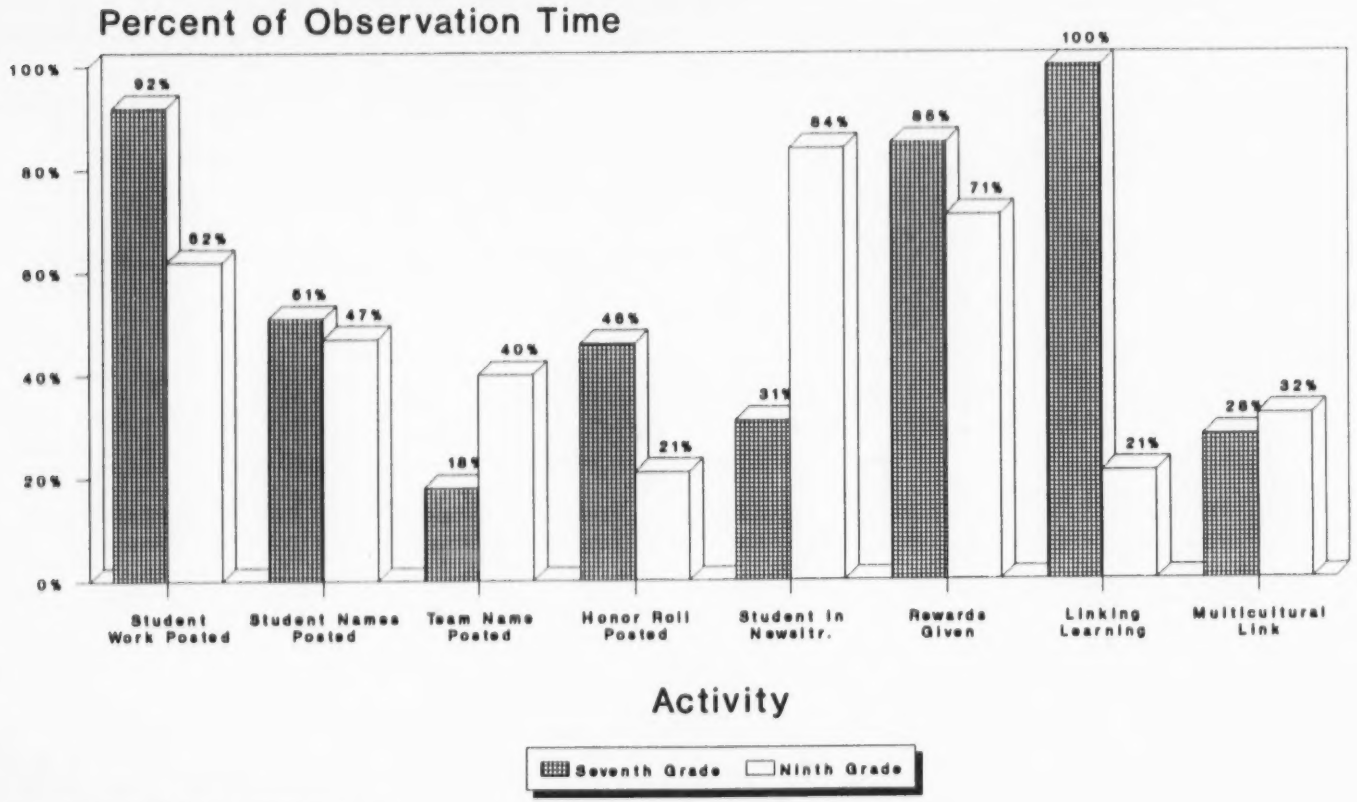
7th Gr. observation time = 1789 minutes
9th Gr. observation time = 1719 minutes
Classroom visits = 39 each grade, 1991

Figure 3
School Within-A-School (SWAS) Program
Observation of Teaching Aids Utilized



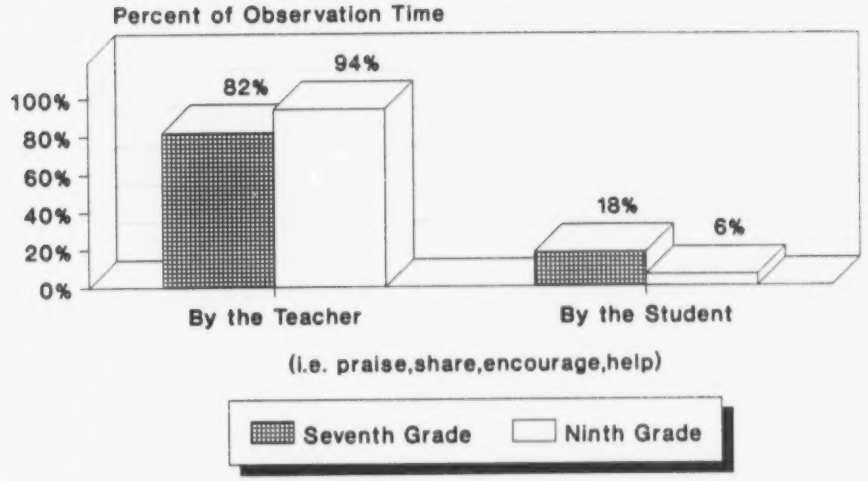
7th Gr. observation time = 1789 minutes
9th Gr. observation time = 1719 minutes
Classroom visits = 39 each grade, 1991

Figure 4
School Within-A-School (SWAS) Program
Observation of SWAS Classroom Climate



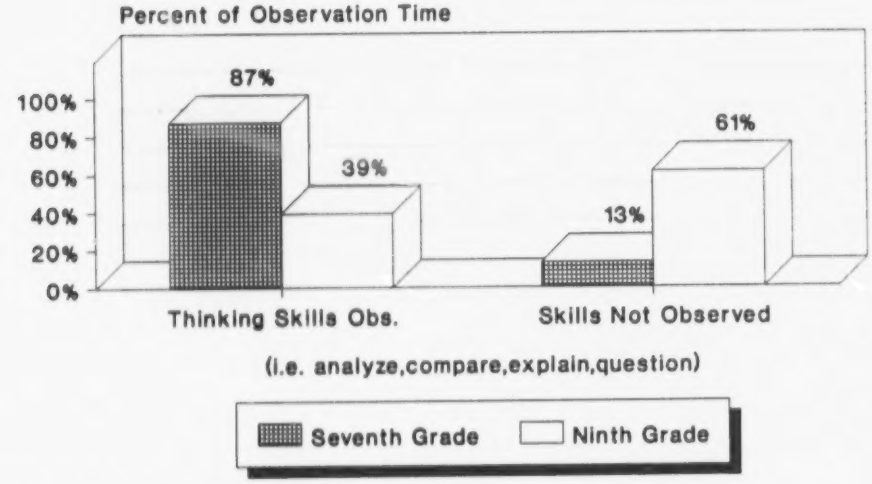
7th Gr. observation time = 1789 minutes
9th Gr. observation time = 1719 minutes
Classroom visits = 39 each grade, 1991

Figure 5
School Within-A-School (SWAS) Program
Observation of Self-Esteem Building



7th Gr. observation time = 1789 minutes
9th Gr. observation time = 1719 minutes
Classroom visits = 39 each grade, 1991

Figure 6
School Within-A-School (SWAS) Program
Observation-Higher Order Thinking Skills



7th Gr. observation time = 1789 minutes
9th Gr. observation time = 1719 minutes
Classroom visits = 39 each grade, 1991

latives were "hands-on" types of activities. In the 7th grade program, visual aids were found 45% of the observation time, and manipulatives were found 3%. In the 9th grade program, during 21% of the observation time visual aids were evident and manipulatives were found in 13% of the time.

Classroom climate. Figure 4 describes classroom climate characteristics. The climate component was designed to motivate and encourage students to do their best in the classroom by providing incentives, recognition, and to link learning between subjects and with ethnic cultures. Percentages were based on the frequency of observation of each classroom climate component.

Students were recognized with posters placed on bulletin boards and in the classroom including, displaying student work (92% and 62%); posting student names (51% and 47%), team names (18% and 40%), honor roll names (46% and 21%); and highlighting student achievements in the SWAS newsletter (31% and 84%) for the 7th grade and 9th grade programs, respectively. Rewards and incentives were given 85% of the time in 7th grade SWAS and 71% in the 9th grade SWAS. Linking learning was observed 100% of the time in the 7th grade program and 21% in the 9th grade program, while multicultural linkage was observed 28% and 32% of the time, respectively.

Self-esteem building. Teaching students to feel good about themselves and others, developing positive self-concepts, and self-confidence were a major component of the SWAS program. Figure 5 describes self-esteem building and interpersonal skills observed in the classroom. Teachers and students were encouraged to use praise, to show empathy, to encourage, share, and help each other and to practice attending behaviors in the classroom. In the 7th grade, positive interpersonal skills were modeled by teachers 82% of the time and by students 18% of the time; while in the 9th grade, positive interpersonal skills were observed by teachers 94% of the time and by students 6% of the time.

Higher order thinking skills. Figure 6 shows the extent to which teaching strategies provided opportunities for students to use inquiry and feedback. For example, the teachers' questions and statements should prompt students to draw relationships of cause and effect, to synthesize, analyze, summarize, compare, contrast, explain, question, or classify the data they have acquired or observed. Higher order thinking skills were observed 87% of the time in the 7th grade program and 39% in the 9th grade program.

Perceptions

To determine the effectiveness of program implementation, perception data were gathered from administrators, teachers and students. The surveys contained items concerning the organizational structure, goal attainment, program support, and overall implementation of the SWAS Linking Learning Model. Percentages were computed for the number of respondents to each item. Open-ended comments were grouped in general categories and distributed to program coordinators.

Administrator perceptions. Principals from the 13 participating schools were interviewed in the spring. Tables 2-A and 2-B outlines the perceptions of principals reported in the sixth year of implementation.

In response to questions about the way students were placed in the SWAS program (items 1 and 2) 100% indicated that placement was based on SWAS criteria and 92% said that teachers were consulted regarding placement of students.

There was diversity among principals regarding the organizational structure of the SWAS program (items 3-7). According to principals, half of the 7th grade teachers (50%) and 71% of the 9th grade teachers were selected based on SWAS criteria. These administrators reported that ninth grade teachers (100%) attended inservice training at a higher percentage than did the 7th grade teachers (50%). There was a half-time coordinator and an interdisciplinary team established in all but one school. All administrators reported that SWAS teachers had a common planning period (100%).

SWAS teachers were appointed in time for the opening of school at the rate of 67% in 7th grade and at 100% in the 9 grade program (item 8). All of the administrators encouraged teachers to participate in SWAS training held during the year (item 9, 100%).

Support for the SWAS program was high across all schools. All administrators said they supported the goals and objectives of SWAS (item 10, 100%), while all but one middle school included the SWAS program in their school site plan and had allocated regular school funds to implement the program (items 11 and 12, 92%). There were adequate facilities to house the SWAS program in all but two schools (item 13, 92%). Administrators were satisfied with the SWAS resource teachers (item 14, 100%).

Overall, half of the 7th grade and all of the 9th grade administrators were satisfied with the implementation of the program (item 15). Although most administrators felt there had been strengths in the SWAS program this year (item 16), the majority would like to see changes

Table 2 - A

Administrator Perceptions
School Within-A-School (SWAS) Program
Spring 1991

Items		Not at all N	Not at all %	To Some Degree N	To Some Degree %	To a Good/Great Degree N	To a Good/Great Degree %
1. Placement of students is based on SWAS criteria.	Combined	---	---%	---	---%	13	100%
	Grade 7	---	---%	---	---%	6	100%
	Grade 9	---	---%	---	--%	7	100%
2. SWAS teachers are consulted regarding placement of students.	Combined	---	---%	1	8%	12	92%
	Grade 7	---	---%	---	---%	6	100%
	Grade 9	---	---%	1	14%	6	86%
3. SWAS teachers were selected based on SWAS criteria.	Combined	---	---%	5	39%	8	61%
	Grade 7	---	---%	3	50%	3	50%
	Grade 9	---	---%	2	29%	5	71%
4. SWAS teachers attended the in-service training held prior to the opening of school.	Combined	2	15%	1	8%	10	78%
	Grade 7	2	33%	1	17%	3	50%
	Grade 9	---	---%	---	---%	7	100%
5. There is a .5 FTE SWAS Coordinator at this school.	Combined	1	8%	---	---%	12	92%
	Grade 7	1	17%	---	---%	5	83%
	Grade 9	---	---%	---	---%	7	100%
6. There is an interdisciplinary team established at this school.	Combined	---	---%	1	8%	12	92%
	Grade 7	---	---%	1	17%	5	83%
	Grade 9	---	---%	---	---%	7	100%
7. The SWAS Team share a common planning period.	Combined	---	---%	---	---%	13	100%
	Grade 7	---	---%	---	---%	6	100%
	Grade 9	---	---%	---	---%	7	100%
8. SWAS teachers were appointed in time for the opening of school.	Combined	---	---%	2	15%	11	85%
	Grade 7	---	---%	2	33%	4	67%
	Grade 9	---	---%	---	---%	7	100%
9. I encouraged SWAS teachers to participate in SWAS training held during the school year.	Combined	---	---%	---	---%	13	100%
	Grade 7	---	---%	---	---%	6	100%
	Grade 9	---	---%	---	---%	7	100%
10. I support the goals and objectives of SWAS.	Combined	---	---%	---	---%	13	100%
	Grade 7	---	---%	---	---%	6	100%
	Grade 9	---	---%	---	---%	7	100%
11. The SWAS Program is included in our school site plan.	Combined	1	8%	---	---%	12	92%
	Grade 7	1	17%	---	---%	5	83%
	Grade 9	---	---%	---	---%	7	100%
12. School funds have been allocated to implement the SWAS Program.	Combined	1	8%	---	---%	12	92%
	Grade 7	1	17%	---	---%	5	83%
	Grade 9	---	---%	---	---%	7	100%

Table 2 - A (Continued)

Administrator Perceptions
School Within-A-School (SWAS) Program
Spring 1991

Items		Not at all N	Not at all %	To Some Degree N	To Some Degree %	To a Good/Great Degree N	To a Good/Great Degree %
13. There are adequate facilities to house the SWAS Program in this building.	Combined	---	---%	1	8%	12	92%
	Grade 7	---	---%	---	---%	6	100%
	Grade 9	---	---%	1	14%	6	86%
14. I am satisfied with the support provided by the SWAS resource teachers.	Combined	---	---%	---	---%	13	100%
	Grade 7	---	---%	---	---%	6	100%
	Grade 9	---	---%	---	---%	7	100%
15. Overall, I am satisfied with the implementation of the SWAS Program in my school.	Combined	1	8%	2	15%	10	77%
	Grade 7	1	17%	2	33%	3	50%
	Grade 9	---	---%	---	---%	7	100%
16. There have been some strengths in the SWAS Program this year.	Combined	---	---%	3	23%	10	77%
	Grade 7	---	---%	3	50%	3	50%
	Grade 9	---	---%	---	---%	7	100%
17. I would like to see some changes made next year to improve the implementation of the SWAS Program at my school.	Combined	---	---%	6	46%	7	54%
	Grade 7	---	---%	2	33%	4	66%
	Grade 9	---	---%	4	57%	3	43%

Note: Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole percent. Based on a survey of principals in schools with the SWAS Program (N = 13)

made next year (item 17). In response to an open-ended question regarding the kind of changes administrators would like to see, four of the seven schools would like to expand SWAS to 10th grade, three wanted to add a reading course, and one administrator projected a smaller freshman enrollment due to renovations to the building and was not sure they would have enough students to have a SWAS program.

As shown in Table 2-B, all schools have more than one "at risk" type program in their schools (item 1). Four of the middle and high schools had three or more programs (i.e., Project Choice, Ad Hoc, Transition, Drug Abuse). The majority of administrators placed equal priority on district and SWAS training (item 2, 85%). Except for reading, most schools offered three of the four recommended subjects (item 3). In the seventh grade program, 83% of the schools offered English, math, social studies and science, while in the ninth grade program, 57% offered English, math, and social studies.

Table 2 - B

Administrator Perceptions
School Within-A-School (SWAS) Program
Spring 1991

Items		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
		One		Two		Three		Four	
1. How many other "At Risk" programs do you have in this school?	Combined	3	23%	2	15%	4	31%	4	31%
	Grade 7	1	17%	1	17%	1	17%	3	50%
	Grade 9	2	29%	1	14%	3	43%	1	14%
		District		Magnet		SWAS		Equal	
2. What priority would you assign to training?	Combined	---		---		2	15%	11	85%
	Grade 7	---		---		2	33%	4	67%
	Grade 9	---		---		--	---%	7	100%
		1		2		3		4	
*3. Which subjects do you offer SWAS students?	Combined	4	31%	6	46%	1	8%	2	15%
	Grade 7	--	---%	5	83%	1	17%	--	---%
	Grade 9	4	57%	1	14%	--	---%	2	29%

Note: Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole percent. Based on a survey of principals in schools with the SWAS Program (N = 13)

*1 English, Math, Social Studies
2 English, Math, Social Studies, Science
3 English, Math, Social Studies, Theme
4 Other Combination

Teacher perception. Surveys were administered to 54% of the SWAS teachers who attended the spring in-service sessions (N = 18). Table 3 presents a summary of teacher responses. For discussion purposes, five broad areas of program implementation were examined.

1. School climate and satisfaction;
2. Staff development;
3. Organizational structure;
4. Administrative and program support; and
5. Impact on students.

School climate and satisfaction. Teacher perceptions about school climate and satisfaction were positive. As noted in Table 3, the majority of teachers enjoyed teaching in SWAS and felt the school climate contributed to the implementation of the SWAS program (items 1 and 2, 94%).

Staff development. Teachers in the SWAS program were encouraged to attend 40 hours of SWAS-related training. This training was designed to help teachers implement the SWAS Linking Learning model into the basic curriculum. Teachers felt that the training was helpful (item 3, 100%), 89% said they regularly attended training during the school year (item 4), and the majority of teachers attended staff development sessions held prior to opening of school (item 5,72%).

Organizational structure. In response to questions about organizational structure, 100% of teachers indicated they were committed to the goals and objectives of the SWAS model (item 6), while only 72% felt that their school's SWAS program was in keeping with the model (item 7). All teachers reported regularly using SWAS instructional strategies (item 8) and believed the program was an asset to the school (item 9). Only 56% of the teachers were satisfied with the SWAS team in their school (item 12), while 83% felt the team had sufficient common planning time to prepare for classes (item 13). Although all administrators agreed that placement of students was based on SWAS criteria, only 72% of the teachers concurred (item 15).

Administrative support. Teachers were asked about their perceptions of the support they had received from building level administration and program coordinators. Fewer teachers indicated that they had the support they needed from building level administration (item 10, 67%), while most of the teachers had received materials funded by the SWAS central budget (item 11, 94%) and all teachers had received support from the SWAS resource teachers (item 14, 100%).

Impact on students. Teacher responded positively regarding the influence of the program on student achievement, attendance and self-concept (items 16-18). All teachers believed that their students enjoyed being in the program (100%) and that the SWAS program had improved most their student's self-concept. Most of the teachers felt that the SWAS program had improved their students' academic achievement (94%) and attendance (72%).

Overall, 94% of the teachers felt there had been some strengths in the program (item 21); 78% were satisfied with the program in their school (item 20); and all teachers wanted changes made next year. In response to an open-ended question regarding the kind of changes teachers would like to make for next year, 33% wanted an evaluation of student placement criteria and more training in cooperative learning and other instructional strategies.

Table 3

Teacher Perceptions
The School Within-A-School Program
Spring 1991

Statement	Responses	1991 (N)	1991 %
1. I enjoy teacning in the SWAS Program.	Agree	17	94%
	Disagree	1	6%
2. I feel the climate (relations, attitudes, feelings, tones, etc.) of the school contributes to the implementation of the SWAS Program.	Agree	17	94%
	Disagree	1	6%
3. I find the activities covered in staff development and in-service training offered by SWAS help me in the classroom.	Agree	18	100%
	Disagree	---	----%
4. I regularly attend the SWAS training held during the school year.	Agree	16	89%
	Disagree	2	11%
5. I attended the SWAS in-service training held prior to the opening of school.	Agree	13	72%
	Disagree	5	28%
6. I am committed to the goals and objectives of the SWAS Linking Learning Model.	Agree	18	100%
	Disagree	---	----%
7. I believe my school's SWAS Program is in keeping with the SWAS Linking Learning Model.	Agree	13	72%
	Disagree	5	28%
8. I regularly use SWAS instructional strategies.	Agree	18	100%
	Disagree	---	----%
9. I believe the SWAS Program is an asset to the school.	Agree	18	100%
	Disagree	---	----%
10. The building level administration has provided the support I need to successfully implement the SWAS program.	Agree	12	67%
	Disagree	6	33%
11. The SWAS central budget has provided the materials I need to implement the SWAS Program in my school.	Agree	17	94%
	Disagree	1	6%
12. I am satisfied with the SWAS team of teachers established in my school.	Agree	10	56%
	Disagree	8	44%
13. The SWAS team has sufficient common planning time to prepare for classes.	Agree	15	83%
	Disagree	3	17%
14. I believe the SWAS resource teachers have provided the support I need to successfully implement SWAS.	Agree	18	100%
	Disagree	---	----%
15. I believe the placement of students is based on SWAS criteria.	Agree	13	72%
	Disagree	5	28%
16. I feel students enjoy being in the SWAS Program.	Agree	18	100%
	Disagree	---	----%
17. The SWAS Program has improved most of my students' academic achievement.	Agree	17	94%
	Disagree	1	6%
18. The SWAS Program has improved most of my students' attendance.	Agree	13	72%
	Disagree	5	28%

Table 3 (Continued)

Teacher Perceptions
The School Within-A-School Program
Spring 1991

Statement	Responses	1991 (N)	1991 %
19. The SWAS Program has improved most of my students' self-concept.	Agree	18	100%
	Disagree	---	----%
20. Overall, I am satisfied with the SWAS Program in my school.	Agree	14	78%
	Disagree	4	22%
21. There have been some strengths in the SWAS Program this year.	Agree	16	94%
	Disagree	1	6%
22. I would like to see some changes made next year to improve the implementation of the SWAS Program at my school.	Agree	12	100%
	Disagree	---	----%

Note: Percentages rounded to the nearest whole percent, N = 18.

Student perceptions. Approximately 53% of the students in the seventh grade and 32% of the ninth grade SWAS program were randomly sampled to receive a student survey. As can be seen in Table 4, student self-concept was high, while their preference for school was low (items 1 and 2). In both programs, 80% of the students believed the SWAS program had helped them realize they can do well in school, however, only 46% of the seventh grade and 38% of the ninth grade students felt better about school.

SWAS students believed they had experienced academic improvements in the core curriculum (items 3-6) and with their grades (items 8-9). The majority of students in both programs indicated that the SWAS program had helped them improve their reading (item 3, 73% and 71%), math (item 4, 75% and 68%), social studies (item 5, 71% and 65%) and English and language arts skills (item 6, 69% and 82%). One fourth of the seventh grade students (25%) and 23% of the ninth grade students indicated they made the honor roll for the first time and 58% and 42% made their best grades since being in the SWAS program.

Linking learning and attendance received moderately high marks by students (items 7 and 11). Linking learning was evident with 59% of the seventh grade and 65% of the ninth grade students. When asked if they attended school on a regular basis, 65% of the seventh and 55% of the ninth grade students agreed.

Table 4

Student Perceptions
The School Within-A-School (SWAS)Program
Spring 1991

Statement	Responses	Grade 7 (N)	Grade 7 %	Grade 9 (N)	Grade 9 %
1. The SWAS Program has helped me realize I can do well in school.	Yes	106	80%	71	80%
	No	26	20%	18	20%
2. I feel better about school since I have been in the SWAS Program.	Yes	64	46%	31	38%
	No	76	54%	51	62%
3. The SWAS Program has helped me improve my reading skills.	Yes	118	73%	67	71%
	No	43	27%	27	29%
4. The SWAS Program has helped me improve my math skills.	Yes	125	75%	63	68%
	No	41	25%	29	32%
5. The SWAS Program has helped me improve my social studies skills.	Yes	112	71%	61	65%
	No	46	29%	33	35%
6. The SWAS Program has helped me improve my English and Language Arts skills.	Yes	106	69%	75	82%
	No	47	31%	17	18%
7. What I learn in one class is reinforced in other SWAS classes.	Yes	68	59%	47	65%
	No	48	41%	25	35%
8. I made the honor roll for the first time since I have been in SWAS.	Yes	45	25%	25	23%
	No	135	75%	84	77%
9. I made my best grades since I have been in SWAS.	Yes	92	58%	43	42%
	No	67	42%	60	58%
10. Working with other students is a good way to learn.	Yes	121	81%	75	81%
	No	28	19%	18	19%
11. I attend school on a regular basis since I have been in SWAS.	Yes	99	65%	52	55%
	No	53	35%	42	45%
12. I know the SWAS teachers care if I learn.	Yes	120	83%	69	81%
	No	25	17%	16	19%
13. The SWAS teachers challenge me to do my best.	Yes	135	84%	78	85%
	No	26	16%	14	15%
14. The SWAS teachers work together to teach my classes.	Yes	115	75%	54	68%
	No	39	25%	26	32%

Note: Percentages rounded to the nearest whole number. Based upon a 53% random sample, Grade 7, N = 180; and a 32% random sample, Grade 9, N = 109

SWAS teaching strategies and learning structures were popular with students (item 10, 12-14). Most of the students felt that working with other students was a good way to learn (item 10, 81%); 83% and 81% believed that SWAS teachers cared if they learn (item 12); 84%

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and 85% felt that SWAS teachers challenged them to do their best (item 13); and 75% and 68% agreed that SWAS teachers worked together (item 14).

Students were asked to respond to an open-ended question (What are your goals for the next school year?). In the seventh grade program, 58% indicated that they wanted to pass and get better grades, while 74% of the ninth grade students wanted to make better grades, become an honor roll student and graduate from high school.

Achievement

ITBS and TAP. The ITBS is a norm-referenced standardized achievement test designed to measure growth in fundamental skill areas of vocabulary, reading, language, writing, methods of study, and mathematics. The test is administered to students in kindergarten through grade eight during the spring semester. The TAP provides an appraisal of student progress toward widely accepted secondary-school goals in the basic skill and basic curricular areas. This test is administered in the spring to students in grades 9-12. Three of the six TAP tests are presented in this report (reading comprehension, mathematics, written expression or language). The ITBS and TAP scores presented in Table 5 are percentile ranks which were derived from mean grade equivalent scores. District scores for 1991, in reading, math and language or written expression, are presented for comparison purposes. The 50th percentile is the national norm. The reader is reminded that to be eligible for SWAS, a student must score between two and three grade levels (as indicated by grade equivalent scores) below the norm on the ITBS.

As shown in Table 5, between 1988 and 1991 seventh grade SWAS students remained the same in reading (16th percentile) and gained one percentile point in math. In contrast, the ninth grade students gained four percentile points in reading (from 12 to 16) and three points in math (from 14 to 17).

Achievement patterns over time show slight gains in scores as a result of the SWAS program. In order to show the level of growth made by seventh and ninth grade SWAS students on the ITBS and TAP in comparison to non-SWAS years, a 1989 cohort group was examined. Students who were enrolled in SWAS in 1991 were tracked from the fifth and six grade (see Tables 6A, 7A, and 8A) and from the seventh and eighth grades (see Tables 6B, 7B, and 8B). The *Teacher's Guide, ITBS Form G/H, (1986),* reports that the average yearly growth in a student's mean grade equivalent score is 10 months. Tables 6A-8B outline the growth in mean grade equivalent scores for SWAS students compared with district students. The reader is

Table 5

School Within-A-School (SWAS) Program
ITBS and TAP
Percentile Ranks Based on Mean Grade Equivalents
Spring 1991

Test / Grade / Group	Reading					Math					Language				
	1988[1]	1989[1]	1990[1]	1991	District 1991	1988	1989	1990	1991	District 1991	1988[2]	1989[2]	1990[2]	1991	District 1991
ITBS															
Seventh					38					34					43
Minority	---	---	---	16		---	---	---	14		---	---	---	22	
Non-Minority	---	---	---	20		---	---	---	31		---	---	---	22	
Total	16	19	21	16		14	18	15	15		---	---	---	22	
TAP															
Ninth					41					37					45
Minority	---	---	---	16		---	---	---	16		---	---	---	30	
Non-Minority	---	---	---	16		---	---	---	28		---	---	---	16•	
Total	12	17	14	16		14	20	14	17		---	---	---	27	

Note: Percentile ranks are converted from grade equivalent scores.

1 Data on minority and non-minority ethnic groups is only available for 1991.

2 1991 first year to report Language percentile ranks for SWAS.

• This racial group represents less than 10 students.

reminded that the number preceding the decimal represents the grade and the number following the decimal represents month within the grade.

Across all subtests, students gained scores at a higher rate while in SWAS program. In the seventh grade cohort, between 1989-90 there was 2 months growth in reading, approximately 5 months growth in math and approximately 2 months growth in language scores. However, during the SWAS year (1990-91) there was a 1 year and one month growth in reading, 8 months growth in math, and 9 months growth in language.

Similarly, in the ninth grade cohort, reading during the non-SWAS year increased by one month, approximately 2 months in math, and 6 months in language. During the SWAS year (1990-91), reading growth increased to approximately 6 months, 4 months in math, while growth in language (written expression) reached 8 months growth.

DRP. The DRP was developed to measure reading comprehension and was designed to be used as a diagnostic test to match appropriate instructional materials with the student's reading level. One of the criterion for selection of SWAS students is a DRP mean score between 30-55. DRP results for 1991 indicated that seventh grade SWAS students performed within entry level requirements, however the ninth grade program performed 2 points above the criterion for selection (see Table 9).

Summary and Recommendations

The SWAS program has completed its sixth year of implementation. There has been slight growth in enrollment from 1988 (332 students in the seventh grade program and 322 students in the ninth grade program) to 1991 (339 students in both programs).

According to students, the SWAS program has helped students improve their attendance and improve their grades. The ninth grade SWAS attendance rate (87%) was higher than the district's ninth grade (72%). The majority of students in both programs indicated that the SWAS program had helped them improve their reading, math, social studies and English skills. Twenty-five percent of the students indicated they made the honor roll this year for the first time.

Classroom observations showed evidence of successful implementation of the Linking Learning Model. The majority of teaching observed in classrooms was based on SWAS guidelines (27% in the 7th grade program and 46% in the 9th grade program) and learning

Table 6 - A
SWAS 1989 Cohort Analysis
ITBS Mean Grade Equivalent
Growth in Reading Scores, 1989-1991

Grade / Year / Group	N	Reading		Reading Growth 1989-90		Reading Growth 1990-91	
		SWAS	Dist.	SWAS	Dist.	SWAS	Dist.
Fifth							
1989							
Minority	110	4.3	5.3	0.2	0.5	1.1	1.2
Non-Minority	7	4.2	5.9	0.8	0.6	0.9	1.3
Total	117	4.3	5.4	0.2	0.5	1.2	1.2
Sixth	117						
1990							
Minority	128	4.5	5.8				
Non-Minority	13	5.1	6.5				
Total	141	4.5	6.0				
Seventh							
1991							
Minority	15	5.7	7.0				
Non-Minority	135	6.0	7.8				
Total	150	5.7	7.2				

Note: Students who were in the seventh grade SWAS program in 1991 were tracked from the 6th grade in 1990 and 5th grade in 1989. The number preceding the decimal represents the grade, the number following the decimal point represents the month within the grade. Numbers are rounded to the nearest month.

Table 6 - B
SWAS 1989 Cohort Analysis
ITBS/TAP Mean Grade Equivalent
Growth in Reading Scores, 1989-1991

Grade / Year / Group	N	Reading		Reading Growth 1989-90		Reading Growth 1990-91	
		SWAS	Dist.	SWAS	Dist.	SWAS	Dist.
Seventh							
1989							
Minority	42	6.3	6.9	0.1	1.2	0.6	0.5
Non-Minority	6	6.6	8.0	0.4	1.1	0.0	1.8
Total	48	6.4	7.2	0.1	1.2	0.5	0.7
Eighth							
1990							
Minority	46	6.4	8.1				
Non-Minority	8	7.0	9.1				
Total	54	6.5	8.3				
Ninth							
1991							
Minority	60	7.0	8.6				
Non-Minority	10	7.0	10.8				
Total	70	7.0	9.1				

Note: Students who were in the ninth grade SWAS program in 1991 were tracked from the 8th grade in 1990 and 7th grade in 1989. The number preceding the decimal represents the grade, the number following the decimal point represents the month within the grade. Numbers are rounded to the nearest month.

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Table 7 - A
SWAS 1989 Cohort Analysis
ITBS Mean Grade Equivalent
Growth in Math Scores, 1989-1991

Grade / Year / Group	Math		Math Growth 1989-90		Math Growth 1990-91	
	SWAS	Dist.	SWAS	Dist.	SWAS	Dist.
Fifth						
1989						
Minority	4.7	5.6	0.5	0.5	0.8	0.9
Non-Minority	4.6	5.9	1.1	0.8	1.3	1.0
Total	4.7	5.6	0.6	0.6	0.9	0.9
Sixth						
1990						
Minority	5.3	6.1				
Non-Minority	5.6	6.6				
Total	5.3	6.2				
Seventh						
1991						
Minority	6.1	7.0				
Non-Minority	6.9	7.7				
Total	6.2	7.1				

Note: Students who were in the seventh grade SWAS program in 1991 were tracked from the 6th grade in 1990 and 5th grade in 1989. The number preceding the decimal represents the grade, the number following the decimal point represents the month within the grade. Numbers are rounded to the nearest month.

Table 7 - B
SWAS 1989 Cohort Analysis
ITBS/TAP Mean Grade Equivalent
Growth in Math Scores, 1989-1991

Grade / Year / Group	Math		Math Growth 1989-90		Math Growth 1990-91	
	SWAS	Dist.	SWAS	Dist.	SWAS	Dist.
Seventh						
1989						
Minority	6.6	7.1	0.2	0.9	0.4	0.4
Non-Minority	6.4	7.8	1.0	1.1	0.7	1.3
Total	6.6	7.2	0.3	1.0	0.5	0.6
Eighth						
1990						
Minority	6.8	8.0				
Non-Minority	7.4	8.9				
Total	6.9	8.2				
Ninth						
1991						
Minority	7.3	8.4				
Non-Minority	8.1	10.1				
Total	7.4	8.8				

Note: Students who were in the ninth grade SWAS program in 1991 were tracked from the 8th grade in 1990 and 7th grade in 1989. The number preceding the decimal represents the grade, the number following the decimal point represents the month within the grade. Numbers are rounded to the nearest month.

Table 8 - A
SWAS 1989 Cohort Analysis
ITBS Mean Grade Equivalent
Growth in Language Scores, 1989-1991

Grade / Year	Language		Language Growth 1989-90		Language Growth 1990-91	
Group	SWAS	Dist.	SWAS	Dist.	SWAS	Dist.
Fifth						
1989						
Minority	4.9	5.9	0.2	0.3	0.9	1.1
Non-Minority	4.8	6.2	0.5	0.5	0.8	1.2
Total	4.9	6.0	0.3	0.3	0.9	1.1
Sixth						
1990						
Minority	5.1	6.2				
Non-Minority	5.3	6.7				
Total	5.2	6.3				
Seventh						
1991						
Minority	6.1	7.3				
Non-Minority	6.1	7.9				
Total	6.1	7.4				

Note: Students who were in the seventh grade SWAS program in 1991 were tracked from the 6th grade in 1990 and 5th grade in 1989. The number preceding the decimal represents the grade, the number following the decimal point represents the month within the grade. Numbers are rounded to the nearest month.

Table 8 - B
SWAS 1989 Cohort Analysis
ITBS/TAP Mean Grade Equivalent
Growth in Language Scores, 1989-1991

Grade / Year	Language		Language Growth 1989-90		Language Growth 1990-91	
Group	SWAS	Dist.	SWAS	Dist.	SWAS	Dist.
Seventh						
1989						
Minority	6.3	7.3	0.6	1.0	0.8	0.8
Non-Minority	6.8	8.0	0.4	1.1	-0.6	1.3
Total	6.4	7.5	0.6	1.0	0.6	0.9
Eighth						
1990						
Minority	7.0	8.3				
Non-Minority	7.2	9.1				
Total	7.0	8.5				
Ninth						
1991						
Minority	7.8	9.2				
Non-Minority	6.6	10.4				
Total	7.6	9.4				

Note: Students who were in the ninth grade SWAS program in 1991 were tracked from the 8th grade in 1990 and 7th grade in 1989. The number preceding the decimal represents the grade, the number following the decimal point represents the month within the grade. Numbers are rounded to the nearest month.

Table 9

Degrees of Reading Power Test
School Within-A-School (SWAS) Program
Spring 1991

Grade	Mean Score		Percentile Score		
Year	SWAS	District	SWAS	District	National
Seventh					
1991 (N = 323)	50	57	18	35	50
Ninth					
1991 (N = 210)	57	63	22	38	50

Note: Scores reported are at the instructional level.

structures (61% and 48%, respectively). Positive classroom climate characteristics were evident in both programs. Self-esteem and interpersonal skills were modeled by teachers 82% and 94% of the time and by students only 18% and 6% of the time, in the 7th and 9th grade, respectively. There was some variability in the structure of the program among the in the 13 participating schools. Although the SWAS program requires a specialized teaching staff, administrators reported that only 50% of the 7th grade teachers and 71% of the 9th grade teachers were selected based on SWAS criteria. In addition, administrators reported that only 50% of the 7th grade teachers attended the summer inservice training. One of the keys to reaching "at-risk" students is selecting highly motivated and well-trained teachers (Gooden, Lane and Levine, 1989). Although teachers reported higher participation rates in the summer inservice training (72%) and training held during the school year (89%), only 54% of the teachers were available for the teacher survey administered during two spring training sessions. Without well-trained teachers, meaningful instruction and student development is less likely to occur.

Most of the teachers enjoyed teaching in the SWAS program and were committed to the goals. Only half of the teachers were satisfied with the SWAS team in their school and slightly more felt they had adequate support from building level administration.

SWAS students believed they had experienced academic improvements in the core curriculum and with their grades. The majority of SWAS students indicated they attended school on a regular basis and had future plans to make better grades and graduate from high school.

Achievement test scores were within program guidelines. However, gains in ITBS scores were higher for students during the year they were in the SWAS program than during the previous two years, across all subtests, except 9th grade written expression. Although the gains in mean grade equivalent scores made by SWAS students were still below the district norm, apparently the program had a positive effect on achievement.

As a result of this summative evaluation, the following improvements are recommended.

1. Identify ways to provide for program stability. The potential contribution of a well organized SWAS program to the educational and social achievement of "at risk" students is well documented. Although the SWAS program has had a positive effect on student achievement, attendance and self-esteem, the program lacks stability within the district's administrative structure and within the participating schools. Successful implementation of the program requires a specialized staff of highly motivated and well-trained teachers. In the last three years, the program has persevered uncertainties over their future existence. Many of the best trained staff, including half-time coordinators, have taken other positions within the district. While the district has provided funding to support most of the program goals, the SWAS program has no clout within the administrative structure. The program has been shifted from Special Projects to Curriculum and has yet to find an appropriate academic home. Several schools have adopted spin-off programs which do not require a SWAS type organizational structure and specialized staff of the SWAS program. In addition, most district-wide initiatives are conducted under the leadership of a program coordinator or director. Although the SWAS program had its foundation as one of the district's "grassroots" intervention program (Gassman, 1988), it has never had an official program coordinator. A resource teacher assumed the primary responsibility for developing the program philosophy, goals, objectives, and guidelines. However, in order for the SWAS program to continue to be an effective student intervention program, the district must officially sanction the program. To maintain a high caliber staff and reach more students, the district should consider appointing a full-time program coordinator with the authority and budget to assist principals implement the SWAS program according to established guidelines.

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Appendix A

School Within-A-School (SWAS)
Comparison of Classroom Observations

Table A-1

Table A-2

Appendix A
Table A-1

School Within-A-School (SWAS) Program
Comparison of Classroom Observations
Percentages of Time Spent on Designated Activities
1986, 1987, 1988, 1991

Type Strategy	1985-1986		1986-1987		1987-1988		1990-91	
Activity	Seventh	Ninth	Seventh	Ninth	Seventh	Ninth	Seventh	Ninth
Teaching Strategy								
SWAS Teaching Strategy	29%	23%	43%	47%	35%	36%	27%	46%
Non-SWAS Teaching Strategy	53%	57%	39%	38%	51%	53%	2%	1%
Total Teaching Strategies	82%	80%	82%	85%	86%	89%	29%	47%
Learning Structures								
Circles of Learning	•	2%	•	4%	•	5%	4%	8%
Cooperative Teams/Groups	4%	4%	3%	7%	1%	4%	7%	1%
Individualized	34%	41%	36%	35%	45%	45%	32%	25%
JIGSAW II	•	•	•	•	•	•	2%	-----
Learning Partners	4%	3%	3%	4%	1%	1%	7%	2%
Whole Class Discussion	34%	•	33%	•	25%	•	6%	8%
Whole Class Lecture	8%	6%	4%	4%	10%	10%	2%	2%
Other SWAS Learning Structures	1%	28%	3%	31%	24%	24%	1%	2%
Total SWAS Learning Structures	85%	84%	82%	85%	89%	89%	61%	48%
Non-SWAS Learning Strategies	•	•	•	•	•	•	1%	-----
Total Learning Structures	85%	84%	82%	85%	86%	89%	62%	48%
Other Activities								
Classroom Management	14%	14%	15%	12%	13%	11%	8%	7%
Interruptions	4%	6%	3%	3%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Total Other Activities	18%	20%	18%	15%	14%	12%	9%	8%
Grand Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	101%	100%	103%

Note: Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole percent and may be less than or exceed 100%. Between 1988-89 and 1989-90 no observation data were collected. 7th Grade Observation Time, 1990-91 = 1789 minutes, 39 classroom visits, 6 middle schools, N = 443; 9th Grade Observation Time, 1990-91 = 1719 minutes, 39 classroom visits, 7 high schools, N = 341.

• Data were not collected for these years.

•• Grand Totals for 1985-86, 1986-87, and 1987-88 do not include Learning Structures.

Appendix A

Table A-2

School Within-A-School (SWAS) Program
Comparison of Classroom Observations
Percentages of Time Spent on Climate Components
1986, 1987, 1988, 1991

Type Strategy	1985-86		1986-87		1987-1988		1990-91	
Activity	Seventh	Ninth	Seventh	Ninth	Seventh	Ninth	Seventh	Ninth
Classroom Climate								
Student work posted	40%	27%	40%	26%	43%	25%	92%	62%
Student names posted	•	•	•	•	•	•	51%	47%
Team name posted	30%	38%	11%	37%	30%	36%	18%	40%
Honor roll posted	•	•	•	•	•	•	46%	21%
Students' listed in newsletter	•	•	•	•	•	•	31%	84%
Rewards and incentives given	17%	14%	12%	8%	•	•	85%	71%
Linking Learning	•	•	•	•	•	•	100%	21%
Multicultural Linkage	•	•	•	•	•	•	28%	32%
Self-Esteem Building/Interpersonal Skills (i.e., empathy, encourage, share, help praise, attend)								
By the teacher	61%	58%	62%	53%	84%	71%	82%	94%
By the student	•	•	•	•	•	•	18%	6%
Total	61%	58%	62%	53%	84%	71%	100%	100%
Teaching Aids								
Visual Aids	10%	13%	30%	22%	50%	45%	45%	21%
Manipulatives	4%	4%	6%	7%	11%	10%	3%	13%
Other	•	•	•	•	•	•	50%	68%
Total							98%	101%
Higher Order Thinking Skills (i.e. analyze, compare, explain, question)	•	37%	•	55%	•	64%	87%	39%

Note: Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole percent and may be less than or exceed 100%. Between 1988-89 and 1989-90 no observation data were collected.
7th Grade Observation Time, 1990-91 = 1789 minutes, 39 classroom visits, 6 middle schools, N = 443
9th Grade Observation Time, 1990-91 = 1719 minutes, 39 classroom visits, 7 high schools, N = 341

• Data were not collected during these years.

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Appendix B

A School Within-A-School Approach for At-Risk Urban Students

A School-Within-A-School Approach for At-Risk Urban Students

Fay E. Gooden, *Kansas City (Missouri) Public Schools*; Marilyn Lane, *Mid-Continent Regional Education Laboratory*; and Daniel U. Levine, *University of Missouri–Kansas City*

Based on the premise that fundamental changes in organizational and instructional arrangements are required to boost the performance of at-risk students in big cities, School-Within-a-School (SWAS) units have been established to help accomplish this goal at middle schools (grades six through eight) and high schools (grades nine through twelve) in the Kansas City, Missouri, school district. Designed for students with reading scores significantly below grade level, the SWAS program usually assigns eighty to one-hundred students at a given grade level to receive academic instruction from four or five teachers of English/language arts, math, reading, social studies, and, in some cases, science.[1] Each regular high school has a ninth-grade unit, and middle schools have operated a unit in either the seventh or eighth grades. Black students, who constitute nearly 70 percent of students in the Kansas City public schools, constitute an even higher percentage of enrollment in SWAS units.

Placement in SWAS is based on academic achievement scores; teacher, counselor, and administrator judgment; attendance records; and other considerations, with particular attention given to functional comprehension scores on the Degrees of Reading Power test. Most ninth-grade participants have scores between the fourth- and seventh-grade levels, and most middle school students in SWAS are at least one grade level below the national average in reading. (Students who are virtual nonreaders or who are severely disruptive generally are not assigned to SWAS because they require even stronger interventions.) Selection criteria are not viewed as consti-

[1]A teacher-coordinator serving at least half-time is also appointed to the SWAS program

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tuting strictly homogeneous grouping or tracking; rather, they are viewed as a means of *levelling* to identify a range of students who can benefit from a year of intense special assistance in relatively small class settings, and who can then participate in regular school programming.

Teachers selected for SWAS must be willing and able to work successfully with at-risk students. Teachers are provided with training and other forms of assistance to implement the following program components and goals:

- Content-area materials below students' frustration levels for independent work and slightly above their instructional level for classroom instruction are utilized, along with the Degrees of Reading Power test and approaches developed by The College Board for matching students and materials.
- Instructional methods emphasizing comprehension development techniques such as those described by Harris and Cooper[2] and by Herber[3] are utilized.
- Teachers are assigned common planning periods intended, in part, to improve the coordination of instruction, particularly with regard to (1) providing reinforcement of curriculum and instruction across classes and (2) working out team agreements regarding selection and use of texts, student grading policies and practices, communications with parents, and other matters.
- Highly motivating experiences for students, such as academic competitions between teams and schools, visits to colleges, conferences with local community leaders, and attendance at cultural events, are provided.
- Data such as Degrees of Reading Power scores are collected regularly to provide ongoing assessment of student progress and of instructional improvement efforts in the program.
- Intensive staff development, including summer training, Saturday sessions, and seminars during the regular school day, is provided; summer staff development has been valuable particularly in providing teachers with time and technical assistance to coordinate curriculum and instruction across subject areas and to share ideas and materials across schools.
- Implementation plans and strategies have been developed to facilitate productive agreements and collaboration at all levels of the

[2]Theodore L. Harris and Eric J. Cooper, eds., *Reading, Thinking, and Concept Development* (New York: College Entrance Examination Board, 1985).

[3]Harold L. Herber, "Developing Reading and Thinking Skills in Content Areas," in *Thinking and Learning Skills*, eds. Judith W. Segal, Susan F. Chipman, and Robert Glaser (Hillsdale, N.J.: Erlbaum, 1985).

school district, including SWAS teaching teams, the larger faculties within which they function, key central-office administrators, and members of the board of education.

When implemented effectively, the Kansas City SWAS program has been very successful. Among ninth-grade units at the high schools, for example, impressive gains have been registered in student attendance, performance on state basic skills tests, and achievement in reading comprehension. Average attendance among ninth-grade SWAS students in 1987–88 was 88 percent—five percentage points higher than the districtwide ninth-grade attendance—and their average gain in reading comprehension was more than two years.

In addition, data collected by the district's Evaluation Office indicated that, in a large majority of classroom observations, SWAS teachers were interacting positively with students and making frequent use of comprehension development strategies in accordance with the program's primary objectives to build students' self-esteem and raise their academic achievement. Evaluators also found that 484 of 491 students enrolled in ninth-grade SWAS units in 1985-86 were still in the district's high schools in 1987–88. Both middle school and senior high school teachers generally have been positive about key components and activities involving implementation at their schools and units.[4]

Other central characteristics and developments that should be noted regarding the operation of the SWAS program in Kansas City include the following:

- By successfully completing four years of operation at the senior high level and three years at the intermediate level, the SWAS program has demonstrated that it is robust and capable of surviving the seemingly constant crises that arise not only in public education in the Kansas City district but in other urban districts across the country.
- Faculty who do not work in the SWAS program generally support and encourage their SWAS colleagues because the motivating and levelling aspects of the program make their schools and classrooms better environments for teaching and learning.
- School officials view SWAS as one of their most important initiatives in their efforts to enhance desegregation and to raise the achievement of minority students as part of major federal court orders issued each year since 1985.

[4]Gregg W. Gossman, *Longitudinal Evaluation of the School Within a School (SWAS) Program* (Kansas City, MO: The School District of Kansas City Evaluation Office, February 1988)

Future Directions

Much evidence from all parts of the United States suggests that instruction provided for at-risk students typically consists of uninspiring and low-level lessons taught by frustrated teachers whose primary goal is to maintain order in their classrooms.[5] The Kansas City SWAS program was designed to reverse this pattern by selecting highly motivated and well-trained teachers to provide more meaningful instruction in a manageable learning environment. Experience in the first four years of the program has indicated that this goal is attainable in big city secondary schools.

The success of the SWAS approach has persuaded Kansas City's superintendent of schools, George Garcia, to consider calculated expansion of the program as part of a long-range effort to provide appropriate and effective education for all students in the Kansas City district. Thus, the district's February 1988 *Master Plan for Instructional Improvement* states that SWAS units will be put into operation for each grade from grade six to grade ten in each school that available data indicate the program is desirable and needed.[6]

In addition, SWAS evaluations have identified issues that need to be resolved so that the program can continue to function on a stable and productive basis in the future. For example, the February 1988 SWAS evaluation report pointed out that "[p]rogram guidelines . . . are not consistently followed throughout the district,"[7] and a needs assessment prepared by the ninth-grade program coordinator stressed the importance of selecting outstanding, experienced teachers who *volunteer* to participate.[8] If district administrators are able to take action to address such issues, the Kansas City public schools may well provide a national example of effectiveness and excellence in working to improve the educational performance of disadvantaged students in big-city schools.

Lessons learned and successes experienced in the SWAS program also have played an important part in developing plans to improve instruction for all students in Kansas City's public middle schools and senior high schools, not just for those students who perform far below the national average in reading. In this regard, district personnel have begun implementing the Comprehension and Cognitive Development program (CCD), which is designed to

[5]Walter Doyle, "Academic Work," *Review of Educational Research*, 53 (1983), 159-199.
[6]George P. Garcia, *Master Plan for Instructional Improvement* (Kansas City, MO: The School District of Kansas City, 23 February 1988), p. 12.
[7]Cassman, *Longitudinal Evaluation*.
[8]Fay Gooden, *SWAS Senior Needs Assessment* (Kansas City, MO: The School District of Kansas City SWAS Office, May 1988).

extend the SWAS emphasis on matching students with materials and utilizing instructional techniques for improving comprehension to all middle and senior high school classrooms. The district's 1988 *Master Plan* specified that "extensive" and "continuing" staff development involving these strategies would be provided each summer and during the regular academic year, and that "the CCD program will be treated and evaluated as an important part of the annual site plan at every middle school and high school."[9] Thus, some of the Kansas City middle and senior high schools whose administrators have responded to this directive may well succeed in demonstrating how instruction focusing on comprehension development can be implemented effectively throughout urban school districts in the future.

[9]Garcia, *Master Plan*, p. 14.